

December 12, 2002

To: Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Chair
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich.

From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES OMBUDSMAN

On November 12, 2002, on motion of Supervisor Antonovich, your Board directed this office to identify funds for the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to restructure and expand its Office of Ombudsman. DCFS' ombudsman functions are currently divided between the Auditor-Controller (complaints by children) and DCFS (complaints by adults). This memo provides a report on this motion.

DCFS has prepared a conceptual plan to restructure its ombudsman function within a new Office of Consumer Services. The planned Office of Consumer Services would consist of two sections: (1) Public Relations/Public Inquiry and (2) Complaint Investigations, which would consolidate ombudsman services for both children and adults. The Office of Consumer Services would also handle many of the complaints and inquiries that are initially directed toward your Board offices.

DCFS has preliminarily identified the staffing requirements for the Office of Consumer Services. The Department has indicated that this reconfiguration can be accomplished by redirecting existing budgeted positions and funding.

My office has requested DCFS to prepare a more detailed identification of specific functions and staffing requirements for the new Office of Consumer Services. After review by my office, DCFS plans to share its draft with each Board office. DCFS will include the Office of Consumer Services in its ongoing reorganization plans to be submitted for Board approval in the coming months.

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If you need any additional information, please contact me, or your staff may contact Claudine Crank at (213) 974-2356.

DEJ:DL
CC:kd

c: Auditor-Controller
Interim Director, Department of Children and Family Services
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors